

Rhode-Island Baptist.

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Vol. I.

MARCH, 1824.

No. 6.

How President Edwards formed his opinion on the decrees.

It would perhaps be a curious inquiry, and not unprofitable, could it be well prosecuted, how men form their various and conflicting opinions. We should probably find that many of them were the result of education, many the result of particular situations, many the result of strong predilections and antipathies, many the result of mere whim and fancy, others, growing out of a single whim, others, could not be traced to any legitimate cause, and but few, the product of real patient labour and investigation. Every man has certain opinions on all subjects with which he is conversant, but should every one be called upon for a reason of his opinion, in many cases, he would be utterly unable to give one, or what is the same thing, utterly unable to give a good one. This being the case, it is not safe to trust in the opinions or creeds of men; not safe, whatever may be their reputation for piety, learning and intellect. It is often the case, however, that in argument, it is urged upon us, that such a distinguished man believed this, and another that, and we, in our turn, offer the same argument. But all this amounts to little or nothing. Eminent men have believed the grossest

absurdities. The great Dr. Johnson was a firm believer in ghosts; and it is said of Lord Bacon, that he held, that the thigh bone of a man, who had been hanged, taken medicinally, was a certain cure for consumption. On the other hand, the weakest men have believed the most wholesome and important truths: as, for instance, they who believe in the existence of God and divine revelation, however feeble their intellect, believe such truths. And, further, opinions formed in the various ways we have supposed above, may nevertheless be true, while opinions formed after deep research and much reflection, may be false; but yet all probability must be allowed to be on the side of him who deeply investigates a subject. On the whole, we are led to the conclusion, that we are not to receive the *ipse dixit* of any one, on any subject, but should ourselves examine all that come under our observation.—Where our opportunity is not great, and we cannot do it, let us examine as many as we can, and on these, form an opinion according to our best judgment, and honestly confess our ignorance with regard to the rest. We should, nevertheless, pay a respectful deference to the opinions of others; and, if they are wiser and better than ourselves, it would become us to search a subject to the bottom, as far as our ability will permit, before we differ from them; or, at least, before we condemn them.

These reflections were suggested to us in reading President Edwards' own account of the manner of forming his opinion concerning the distinguishing doctrines of Calvin, which he most heartily and piously embraced. Had he not stated it himself, we could not possibly have brought our minds to believe, that a man, of his eminent piety, and still more, of his distinguished intellect, could have, or would have, formed his opinion, on a subject so vastly important, in the way in which he states he actually did it. We remark this the more, because he was a great controversialist; and because his great name and talents have probably induced some to adopt the same opinion, and confirmed more

in it, who were wavering between that system and that of the doctrine of free grace ; and because his authority is deemed, by many, almost conclusive, on any religious subject. We here transcribe his own words :

“ From my childhood up, my mind had been full of objections against the doctrine of God’s sovereignty, in choosing whom he would to eternal life, and rejecting whom he pleased ; leaving them eternally to perish, and be everlastingly tormented in hell. It used to appear like a horrible doctrine to me. But I remember the time very well, when I seemed to be convinced, and fully satisfied, as to this sovereignty of God, and his justice, in thus disposing of men, according to his sovereign pleasure. But never could give an account how, or by what means, I was thus convinced ; not in the least imagining at the time, nor a long time after, that there was any extraordinary influence of God’s spirit in it ; but only that I now saw further, and my reason apprehended the justice and reasonableness of it. However, my mind rested in it ; and it put an end to all those cavils and objections. And there has been a wonderful alteration in my mind, with respect to the doctrine of God’s sovereignty, from that day to this ; so that I scarce ever have found so much as the rising of an objection against it, in the most absolute sense, in God’s shewing mercy to whom he will shew mercy, and hardening whom he will.”

Such is his own account of his embracing the system of Calvinism. Had his biographer given this, we should certainly have questioned his authority for making such a statement ; not being willing to place so great and good a man, as President Edwards, in so queer a light ; but, it is his own, and therefore we are bound to receive it, undisputed. To reason upon this subject, *a priori*, were it asked of what creed was President Edwards, and how did he form it ? Would not the natural reply be, especially when we consider his astonishing mental endowments and piety, that he formed it from the Bible, and with great care, patience and labour : seeking, by prayer, the assistance and counsel

of the Lord? Surely, no rational person would suppose the contrary. How then would an intelligent inquirer be surprised, to be informed, that he was converted from a deep rooted antipathy to this system, to great love for it, during a period scarcely long enough for a passing meteor of the night to glow and expire—in a moment—in the twinkling of an eye. Yet, such was the fact, if we may believe himself. He says, "*the doctrine of God's sovereignty*," a doctrine, which, to his mind, included the ideas of election and reprobation, "*used to appear like a horrible doctrine to him*"—and then, "I remember the time very well, when I *seemed* to be convinced" of the justice of this sovereignty; "*but NEVER could give an account how, or by what means, I was thus convinced.*" We are not now proving that his views of doctrine were not scriptural, though we believe it, and shall therefore but remark, in this place, that he did not acquire them in a scriptural manner. The Bible is not only our rule of faith, but teaches us to "*prove all things.*" But, without consulting the Bible, or labouring to test opinions, he forms one, in a moment. Having done this, it was natural that he should make the scriptures, if possible, support it. Thus, the fancy of a single moment threw this great man into the scale of Calvinism. When men form their opinions in this way, though they may embrace the truth, yet they are as likely to fall into one opinion, as into another. A fancy of another cast had confirmed him in his old system; or had he patiently investigated the subject, he might have been numbered with Arminius, Grotius, Whitby and Locke. We know it will be said, that he ably maintained and defended the opinion he adopted. But this is not the point. He had already formed it, and in the hasty manner we have mentioned. Men think they are bound to defend their sentiments, and will do it, to the last extremity. The pride of opinion, when indulged, cleaves to men with the most inveterate obstinacy. If you call a man a villain, conscious of his integrity, he may smile, and let you pass. But tell him that he is a heretick, and you wound him to the quick; and if he

be not a Christian, he can scarcely forgive you. President Edwards was a man "of like passions with others." Adopting a creed, he no doubt was influenced in supporting it, in a greater or less degree, in the same manner that other men are. He adopted this creed when he was young, perhaps he was twenty years of age. What weight such a circumstance ought to have in this case, we will not decide. Had he adopted an opposite system, no doubt the charitable among Calvinists would have allowed it to extenuate his offence. It would have been said, that it was not the result of sober experience. We may, in the present case, say, that the ardour of youth might have heightened his visionary view.

(To be continued.)

For the Rhode-Island Baptist.

DOCTRINAL.

In the course of my reading the other day, I took up a book where many passages of scripture being quoted for the purpose of maintaining the doctrine of particular election and reprobation, and its consequent doctrine of necessity; I thought it might be doing a service to some of my fellow-christians, to show that these, and many other passages have been misapplied, and that they are capable of another and more consistent meaning.

If we should assert, that what God has done for particular reasons, may be done absolutely and from mere sovereignty; and then quote detached passages of scripture to prove it, we should surely be led into error. This appears to me to be the case of those who assert, that because God withhold some men from their purposes, at some times and under particular circumstances; that he therefore, withholds, in an absolute manner all who do not commit sin, and ordains others

to commit all the sin they do. Genesis, xx. 6, is quoted to prove the doctrine, "*I withheld thee from sinning against me.*" But read the whole verse, and it will be sufficiently apparent that the conclusion drawn is unwarrantable. "God said to him (Abimelech) in a dream, yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me, therefore I suffered thee not to touch her." Does it not appear that he was kept as the reward of his virtue, as well as for Abraham's piety? The following is quoted with the same view. "*The Lord hath sworn, saying, surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have proposed, so shall it stand.*" Isaiah. xiv. 24. We have hardly need to say, do but read on to the 27th verse, and the argument is destroyed. The Lord had determined to break the yoke of the Assyrians from off his people. For this he was about to stretch out his hand, and who shall turn it back? Does this look like determining all the actions of all men?

To prove that God influences the hearts of all to do whatever they perform, the following passage from Proverbs, xxi. 1, is quoted and commented on. "*The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.*" That God sometimes turns the hearts of wicked kings aside from their vile purposes, or restrains their fury, and frustrates their ambition; may easily be believed without concluding that he moves and incites men to break his own law, and commit every species of diabolical wickedness. Instances of it are frequently recorded in the scriptures. Such was the case of Ahasuerus, of Nebuchadnezzar, and Sennacherib. But it must be a monstrous abuse of such instances of God's providential interpositions for his people, to infer that he moves the hearts of tyrannical kings to commit all the acts of oppression and murder of which they are guilty. But we are told "we cannot make one hair white or black. And that it is God that makes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Hence it is inferred that men can no

more alter any thing which relates to their conduct, than they can promote or hinder the rising of the sun and the falling of the rain. The argument amounts to this, that because we are incapable of controlling the heavenly bodies, and the established order of providence by which we appear different in youth from what we do in hoary age, we therefore have no power over our words, or thoughts, or actions. The only reply needful to be made to this argument is, that we are criminal on this ground, for not reversing the order of the planets, and changing the seasons, and renewing our own age and appearance at pleasure, as for not reforming our vices and attending to our duties. But it is said, "Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards," and that as sparks ascend by necessity, so, of necessity man must meet with whatever happens to him during his existence. But I would ask, how does this agree with the following passages of scripture? "Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue, keepeth his soul from troubles."—Prov. xxi. 23. "He that will love his life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil; let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it."—I. Peter, iii. 10, 11. Are there no troubles which flow from our immoralities, which may be avoided? Where, then, is the wisdom or propriety of the above scriptures?

But it is asserted that the following scriptures prove that men act from necessity: "*Ye all SHALL be offended, because of me.*" "*I send unto you prophets, &c. some of them ye SHALL kill, and some of them ye SHALL scourge.—One of you SHALL betray me. Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them, also, I MUST bring; and they SHALL hear my voice.*" Here, some have insisted, was a double necessity. In these, and many such scriptures, it is replied, that the word SHALL is used simply to express a future tense; and that it might as well have been *WILL kill, WILL scourge, WILL betray, WILL be offended, WILL hear my voice.* But it is replied, there is a must needs; as when it is said, in John iv, 4—Christ "*must needs go through Samaria.*" This has been a sugar-stick for ma-

ny a preacher, beside the eloquent and great Mr. Whitfield. But where is the *must needs*? Why, simply because Samaria lay on the direct road from Jerusalem to Galilee; and he *must needs* go through it, as you *must needs* go through the door to go out of your house into the street.

J. F.

(*To be continued.*)

PRECIOUS RELICK.

[The following is copied from an original writing of Governour Hopkins, who was once the Chief Magistrate of Rhode-Island; which MSS. is now in the possession of the venerable MOSES BROWN, of this town. It shews that he had reflected on the subject on which he writes; and though he treats it by way of supposition and quere, discovers that he was an advocate of the doctrines of free and impartial grace. It is believed that these doctrines have, at all periods, most generally prevailed in this State, and that the opposite system of partial and restricted grace, is of exotick growth. As the citizens of this state were the first to recognise the principle of complete religious toleration, we hope that they will be the last to maintain and defend it; and with it, those precious doctrines of grace, so nearly allied to it, taught by Christ and his Apostles, which leave the sinner no excuse for his sin, and which represent his final ruin as self-caused, and not for the want of sufficient divine aid.—*Ed. R. I. Baptist*]

“Suppose two men, by their own crimes, plunged into an horrible pit, in which they could exert no effort of their own to get out; nay more, saw not their miserable situation, and had not so much as a will to come out, were they able. A powerful agent at hand was able to help them, who, of his own mere pleasure, plucks one out, and leaves the other where he was, without any offer to help him. What doth this exhibit to our view, except a capricious exertion of arbitrary power,

unaccompanied by justice, which always requires an equal conduct to all under similar circumstances?

Vary the metaphor: the two men, in the same condition as above; the agent kindly offers to take them both out, if they do not resist him: one is passive, and is taken out; the other resists, and is left in the pit. Is not the agent, in this last case, put in a much more amiable point of light, free grace higher exalted, strict justice better observed, and all merit equally excluded?

Again, to vary the metaphor: the two men, in the same condition as above; the agent sends a message to them to inform them of the miserable condition they are in; that he is willing and able to take them out, and preserve them from falling in again, if they follow his direction. One believes the message, and resolves to follow the directions, and in consequence of it is taken out; the other disbelieves the message, and therefore is left in the pit. Is not free grace as highly exalted, justice as well preserved, and merit as much excluded in this, as in either of the other cases?

Query.—Which of these suppositions agree best with the plan of the gospel, as set forth in the New Testament?

To the Editor of the Rhode-Island Baptist.

Dear Sir—If you have nothing of more importance to fill a page of your useful miscellany than the following literal translation of the 110th Psalm, from the French Bible, you would probably edify some of your readers, by giving this a place, together with the few remarks which follow it:

PSALM, CX.

1. The Eternal has said to my Lord; sit thou at my right, until that I have put thy enemies for the footstool of thy feet.
2. The Eternal shall make to go out of Zion the sceptre of thy power, saying, reign thou in the midst of thy enemies.

3. Thy people *shall be a people full of freewill*, in the day that thou shalt assemble thy army with a holy pomp; thy posterity shall be as the dew which is produced from the bosom of the aurora.

4. The Eternal has sworn, and will not repent *himself of it*, that thou art a Priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek.

5. The Lord is at thy right; he shall transpierce kings in the day of his anger.

6. He shall exercise judgment upon the nations, he shall fill all places with the dead bodies; he shall crush the chiefs that reign over great countries.

7. He shall drink of the torrent in the way; therefore shall he raise his head on high.

This Psalm is prophetick of the exalted dignity of Christ, when raised to the right hand of majesty to the superiour glory of the heavens, there to reign, until all things should be put under him, and acknowledge his divine authority.

His supreme and righteous government is to be extended over his foes, as well as friends. This is to be effected by the sceptre of his power going out of Zion, in the preaching of the gospel, amidst the enmity and opposition of Jews and heathens.

In the midst of this opposition, and in the face of danger, his people will freely and readily volunteer in his service, to worship him in spirit and in truth, in the beauty of holiness; and unite to the church as to an army of martyrs and witnesses, being as numerous, beautiful, and refreshing as the dew of aurora.

To encourage and comfort them, Christ is declared to be a merciful, faithful, and perpetual High Priest, after the order of Melchizedek.

The conquest, suppression, and destruction of his foes who oppose him and his cause follow.

His ample qualifications to triumph over all opposition, and reign on high are indicated. Compare this with the 2d and 45th Psalms.

This prophecy was fulfilled when Christ arose from the dead, and ascended far above all principalities and powers at the right hand of majesty; being then exalted to be a Prince and Saviour. When he poured out his spirit, and endued his apostles to preach the gos-

pel, and gave them authority to confirm his truth with signs and wonders, to stop the mouths of gain-sayers, and face their enemies with boldness. This was the day of his muster or power, when he gathered in one, Jews and Gentiles; all who willingly obeyed his word and united in his church to worship him in the beauty of holiness. The number of the disciples were multiplied daily. From Jerusalem it spread through the Roman empire. Christ was invoked as the High Priest of the profession of Christians, and the ordinances were administered in his name. The destruction of the Jews, and subsequent judgments on the heathen who persecuted his church, verify the 6th and 7th verses. Like a matchless conqueror, pursuing his victories, he refreshes his army and proceeds triumphantly until he shall put all things under his feet. DELTA.

THE CHRISTIAN NAME.

“A Christian is the highest style of man.”

“*The Disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.*”

The name Gentile was odious to the Jews, and the name Jew was odious to the Gentiles. The name Christian swallows up both in one common and agreeable appellation. He that hath taken down the partition wall, hath taken partition names, and united all his followers in his own name, as a common denomination. For now, says Paul, “*there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all, and in all.* Col. iii. 11. *And ye are all one in Christ Jesus.* Gal. iii. 28. According to a prophecy of Zechariah, *The Lord shall be king over all the earth; and in that day there shall be one Lord, and his name one.* Zech. xiv. 9.

It is a due honour to Jesus Christ, the founder of christianity, that all who profess his religion should

wear his name ; and they pay an extravagant and even idolatrous compliment to his subordinate officers and ministers, when they take their denomination from them. Had this humour prevailed in the primitive church, instead of the common name Christians, there would have been as many party names as there were apostles, or eminent ministers. There would have been Paulites from Paul ; Peterites from Peter ; Johnites from John ; Barnabites from Barnabas, &c. Paul took pains to crush the first risings of this party spirit in those churches which he planted ; particularly in Corinth, where it most prevailed. While they were saying, *I am of Paul ; and I of Apollos ; and I of Cephas ; and I of Christ*, he puts this pungent question to them : “Is Christ divided ? Are his servants the ringleaders of so many parties ? Was Paul crucified for you ? Or were ye baptized in or into the name of Paul, that ye should be so fond to take your name from him ?” He counted it a happiness that providence had directed him to such a conduct as gave no umbrage of encouragement to such a humour. *I thank God*, says he, *that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius ; lest any should take occasion to say, I baptized into my own name, and was gathering a party for myself.* I. Cor. i. 12—15.

But alas ! how little has this convictive reasoning of the apostle been regarded in the future ages of the church ? What an endless variety of denominations taken from some men of character, or from some little peculiarities, has prevailed in the Christian world, and crumbled it to pieces, while the Christian name is hardly regarded ? Not to take notice of Jesuits, Jansenists, Dominicans, Franciscans, and other denominations and orders in the Popish church, where, having corrupted the thing, they act very consistently to lay aside the name, what party names have been adopted by the protestant churches, whose religion is substantially the same common christianity, and who agree in much more important articles than in those they differ ; and who therefore might peaceably unite under the common name of Christians ? We have Lutherans, Calvinists,

Arminians, Zuinglians, Churchmen, Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, and a long list of names which I cannot now enumerate. To be a Christian is not enough now-a-days, but a man must also be something more and better; that is, he must be a strenuous bigot to this or that particular church. But where is the reason or propriety of this? I may indeed believe the same things which Luther or Calvin believed: but I do not believe them on the authority of Luther or Calvin, but upon the sole authority of Jesus Christ; and therefore I should not call myself by their name, as one of their disciples, but by the name of Christ, whom alone I acknowledge as the author of my religion, and my only Master and Lord. If I learn my religion from one of these great men, it is indeed proper I should assume their name. If I learn it from a parliament or convocation, and make their acts and canons the rule and ground of my faith, then it is enough for me to be of the established religion, be that what it will; I may with propriety be called a mere conformist; that is my highest character: but I cannot be properly called a Christian: for a Christian learns his religion, not from acts of parliament or from the determinations of councils, but from Jesus Christ and his gospel.—DAVIES.

(*To be continued.*)

EXTRACT—THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

Visu carentem magna pars veri latet.—SENECA.

Truth is in a great measure concealed from the blind.

In our present condition, which is a middle state, our minds are, as it were, chequered with truth and falsehood; and as our faculties are narrow, and our views imperfect, it is impossible but our curiosity must meet with many repulses. The business of mankind in this life being rather to act than to know, their portion of knowledge is dealt to them accordingly.

From hence it is, that the reason of the inquisitive has so long been exercised with difficulties, in accounting for the promiscuous distribution of good and evil to the virtuous and the wicked in this world. From hence come all those pathetick complaints of so many tragical events which happen to the wise and the good; and of such surprising prosperity, which is often the reward of the guilty and the foolish; that reason is sometimes puzzled, and at a loss what to pronounce upon so mysterious a dispensation.

Plato expresses his abhorrence of some fables of the poets, which seem to reflect on the gods as the authors of injustice: and lays it down as a principle, that whatever is permitted to befall a just man, whether poverty, sickness, or any of those things which seem to be evils, shall either in life or death conduce to his good. My reader will observe how agreeable the maxim is to what we find delivered by a greater authority. Seneca has written a discourse purposely on this subject, in which he takes pains, after the doctrine of the Stoicks, to shew that adversity is not in itself an evil; and mentions a noble saying of Demetrius, "That nothing would be more unhappy than a man who had never known afflictions." He compares prosperity to the indulgence of a fond mother to a child, which often proves his ruin; but the affection of the Divine Being to that of a wise father who would have his sons exercised with labour, disappointment and pain, that they may gather strength, and improve their fortitude. On this occasion the philosopher rises into that celebrated sentiment, "That there is not on earth a spectacle more worthy the regard of a Creator intent on his works than a brave man superiour to his sufferings;" to which he adds, "that it must be a pleasure to Jupiter himself to look down from heaven and see Cato, amidst the ruins of his country, preserving his integrity."

This thought will appear yet more reasonable, if we consider human life as a state of probation, and adver-

sity as the post of honour in it, assigned often to the best and most select spirits.

But what I would chiefly insist on here, is, that we are not at present in a proper situation to judge of the counsels by which providence acts, since but little arrives at our knowledge, and even that little we discern imperfectly; or, according to the elegant figure in holy writ, "We see but in part, and as in a glass darkly." It is to be considered, that providence, in its economy, regards the whole system of time and things together, so that we cannot discover the beautiful connexion between incidents which lie widely separated in time, and by losing so many links of the chain, our reasonings become broken and imperfect. Thus those parts of the moral world which have not an absolute, may yet have a relative beauty, in respect of some other parts concealed from us, but open to his eye before whom "past, present, and to come," are set together in one point of view: and those events, the permission of which seems now to accuse his goodness, may in the consummation of things both magnify his goodness, and exalt his wisdom. And this is enough to check our presumption, since it is in vain to apply our measures of regularity to matters of which we know neither the antecedents nor the consequents, the beginning nor the end.

I shall relieve my readers from this abstracted thought, by relating here a Jewish tradition concerning Moses, which seems to be a kind of parable, illustrating what I have last mentioned. That great prophet, it is said, was called up by a voice from heaven to the top of a mountain; where, in conference with the Supreme Being, he was permitted to propose to him some questions concerning his admiration of the universe. In the midst of this divine colloquy he was commanded to look down on the plain below. At the foot of the mountain there issued out a clear spring of water, at which a soldier alighted from his horse to drink. He was no sooner gone than a little boy came to the same place, and finding a purse of gold which the soldier had

dropped, took it up and went away with it. Immediately after this, came an infirm old man, weary with age and travelling, and having quenched his thirst, sat down to rest himself by the side of the spring. The soldier missing his purse, returns to search for it, and demands it of the old man, who affirms he had not seen it, and appeals to heaven in witness of his innocence. The soldier, not believing his protestations, kills him. Moses fell on his face with horror and amazement, when the divine voice thus prevented his expostulations: "Be not surprised, Moses, nor ask why the Judge of the whole earth has suffered this thing to come to pass; the child is the occasion that the blood of the old man is spilt; but know, that the old man whom thou sawest, was the murderer of that child's father."

ADDISON.

SCRIPTURE ILLUSTRATIONS.

Isaiah xiii. 14. *It shall be as the chased roe.*—Hunting antelopes, or roes, is a favourite Eastern diversion. The following is a particular and interesting account of the practice. "The day before Colonel B. left us, we rode together to view a species of hunting which was to us both novel and singular. It is the employing the cheeta in the chase of the antelope. There were three of these cheetas lying down, each in a country cart, called a hackery; they were tied with a slip knot, and hoodwinked. When within about a hundred yards of a herd of antelopes, which he approaches with the greatest caution, the sheekaree, or huntsman, takes the hood off from one cheeta, and occasionally from two; turns his head towards the game, and loosens the slip knot; the animal instantly springs from the hackery, and makes toward the herd of antelopes, taking advantage of every bush between them which can for a moment conceal his approach, and invariably singling out the old buck as the object of his attack. If the

cheeta can approach undiscovered, sufficiently near to spring on his prey, he strikes it down with the force and ferocity of the tiger; but if, as is generally the case, the antelope discovers him at a little distance, he darts off with all the speed which an agony of terror can inspire, and the cheeta after him; but should the latter not overtake him in the first two or three hundred yards, he usually stops short, retreats to some neighbouring bush to conceal himself, and is then in so sulky a humour, that it requires caution for his keeper in approaching him to put on the hood and reconduct him to the hackery. If the chase is successful (and we had an opportunity of seeing both cases) the cheeta seizes the poor antelope in his mouth, throws his fore paws round him, and there remains sucking his blood, until the keeper or huntsman comes up; who, in order to rescue the prey from his grasp, dips a piece of raw flesh in its blood, places it in a wooden bowl with a long handle, and offers it to the cheeta: while he is engaged in devouring this, a rope is fastened round his neck, and the prey gradually removed from his sight, until he can be again hoodwinked, and replaced in his hackery."—*Diary of a Tour through Southern India, Egypt, and Palestine, by a Field Officer of Cavalry.*

I Samuel, iv. 13. *And when he came, lo, Eli sat upon a seat by the way side watching.* This station was chosen by Eli, as best adapted to his circumstances: but it might also be in conformity to a prevailing custom, such situations being open and publick. Thus we find a similar place used for the administration of justice. "I drank the usual cup of coffee, and, having taken my leave with as little ceremony as was shewn me, I set off for the Pacha's palace, where his delegate transacts business. He was seated outside the gate, on a fallen stone, and was engaged in judging, and ultimately sentencing, an Arab peasant, a very old man, for wounding a tame pigeon."—*ibid.*

It is well known, that during the reign of King Charles 2d. of England, many innocent persons suffered in consequence of the false testimony of a witness by the name of Oates. One of these, "Richard Langhorn, composed, after his trial, a Poem, which is preserved in the State Trials, entitled 'The Affections of my Soul, after Judgment given against me, in a Court of Justice, upon the Evidence of False Witnesses.' It is a most singular and passionate production: a Poem, it must be called, though it is not in verse, (it appears, indeed, by some other of his pieces that the writer did not understand wherein the difference between prose and metre consists,) but with such an arrangement of the lines as is usual upon monuments. In that arrangement only it resembles the lapidary style, not in antithetick turns, epigrammatick points, or any artifices of composition; his feelings were too much exalted for these, and his soul too full. Perhaps there is not in this, or any other language, a Poem, which appears to have flowed so entirely from the heart. A specimen is here subjoined, not merely as a literary curiosity unique in its kind, but for its passion and its piety:

London Quarterly Review.

'It is told me I must die.
 O happy news!
 Be glad, O my soul,
 And rejoice in Jesus thy Saviour.
 If he intended thy perdition,
 Would he have laid down his life for thee?
 Would he have expected thee, with so much patience,
 And given thee so long a time for penance?
 Would he have called thee with so much love,
 And illuminated thee with the light of his spirit?
 Would he have drawn thee with so great force,
 And favoured thee with so many graces?
 Would he have given thee so many good desires?
 Would he have set the seal of the Predestinate upon thee,
 And dressed thee in his own livery?
 Would he have given thee his own cross?
 And given thee shoulders to bear it with patience?

'It is told me I must die.
 O happy news!

Come on, my dearest soul :
 Behold, thy Jesus calls thee !
 He prayed for thee upon his cross.
 There he extended his arms to receive thee ;
 There he bowed down his head to kiss thee ;
 There he cried out with a powerful voice :
 Father, receive him, he is mine !
 There he opened his heart to give thee entrance ;
 There he gave up his life to purchase life for thee.

' It is told me I must die.
 O happy news !
 I shall be free from misery ;
 I shall no more suffer pain ;
 I shall no more be subject to sin ;
 I shall no more be in danger of being damned :
 But from henceforth
 I shall see and I shall live,
 I shall praise and I shall bless ;
 And this I shall always do,
 Without ever being weary
 Of doing what I always am to do.

' It is told me I must die.
 O what happiness !
 I am going
 To the place of my rest ;
 To the land of the living ;
 To the haven of security ;
 To the kingdom of peace ;
 To the palace of my God ;
 To the nuptials of the Lamb ;
 To sit at the table of my King ;
 To feed on the bread of Angels ;
 To see what no eye hath seen ;
 To hear what no ear hath heard ;
 To enjoy what the heart of man cannot comprehend.

O my Father,
 O thou the best of all fathers,
 Have pity on the most wretched of all thy children !
 I was lost, but by thy mercy am now found :
 I was dead, but by thy grace am now raised again :
 I was gone astray after vanity,
 But am now ready to appear before thee.

O my Father,
 Come now in mercy and receive thy child !
 Give him the kiss of peace ;

Remit unto him all his sins ;
 Clothe him with thy nuptial robe ;
 Receive him into thy house ;
 Permit him to have a place at thy feast ;
 And forgive all those who are guilty of his death .

STYLE OF THE BIBLE.

The principles and rules of composition, derived from Greek and Roman schools, and the examples of their principal writers, have been so generally adopted in modern literature, that the style of the scriptures, differing so essentially from them, could not be imitated without great affectation. But for pathos of narrative, for the selection of incidents that go directly to the heart ; for the picturesque of character and manners ; the selection of circumstances that mark the individuality of persons ; for copiousness, grandeur, and sublimity of imagery ; for unanswerable cogency and closeness of reasoning ; for irresistible force of persuasion ; no book in the world deserves to be so unceasingly studied, and so profoundly meditated upon, as the Bible.—*John Quincy Adams' letters to his Son.*

BEAUTIFUL THOUGHT.

A root, set in the finest soil, in the best climate, and blest with all that sun, and air, and rain, can do for it, is not in so sure a way of its growth to perfection, as every man may be, whose spirit aspires after all that which God is ready and infinitely desirous to give him. For the sun meets not the springing bud that stretches towards him, with half that certainty, as God, the source of all good, communicates himself to the soul that longs to partake of him.—*Law.*

THE FORCE OF TRUTH!!!

The following extract from Seward's Journal, of April, 1740, found in the life of Rev. George Whitefield, shews, at once, the force of truth, and that the wicked are sometimes taken in their own craftiness :

" Heard of a drinking club that had a negro boy attending them, who used to mimick people for their diversion. The gentlemen bid him mimick Mr. Whitefield, which he was very unwilling to do ; but they insisting upon it—he stood up and said, "*I speak the truth in Christ. I lie not ; unless you repent, you will all be damned.*" This unexpected speech broke up the club, which has never met since.

 THE EFFICACY OF PRAYER.

From the same Journal.

" Before Mr. Whitefield left Philadelphia, he was desired to visit one who was under a deep sense of his sin, from hearing him preach. And in praying with this person, he was so carried beyond himself, that the whole company (which were about twenty,) seemed to be filled with the Holy Ghost, and magnified the God of heaven."

 REVIVALS OF RELIGION.

It is said, that during the year 1823, our country was blest with about four hundred revivals of religion ; which resulted in the hopeful conversion of twenty-seven thousand individuals. " This is the Lord's doings ; it is marvellous in our eyes." Since the present year has commenced, almost every post brings us intelligence, that the Lord is still pouring out his spirit on different parts of our highly favoured land.

ARMINIAN BAPTISTS.

The Religious Informer for Jan. states, that the Quarterly Meeting of Rhode-Island, contains seven churches, and five hundred forty-four members. Letters from Pennsylvania, New-York and Vermont, to the editor of that paper, give information of several glorious and refreshing revivals among this people, in those states. We intend to give some further information concerning these Baptists, in our next number.

 ANECDOTE.

A minister of the gospel, in a neighbouring state, who was a preacher of free grace to all who would receive it, was called upon by a member of his church, a good woman, who was exceedingly distressed, as she had been told he was an Armenian. He replied to her, "my good sister, do not distress yourself about this story, ye may be asured that I was born in ****, and not in Armenia." She was satisfied, and did not again, in this way, trouble her pious pastor.

 OLD TIMES—NOT IN THE PRIMER, BUT IN—SOBER HISTORY.

SQUANTO, an Indian, that had been stolen and sold for a Slave—the first friend that the English found—who instructed them how to plant their corn—introduced Massasoit to them—who submitted himself to the King of England, and persuaded other Sachems to do the same, receives the thanks of the celebrated Cotton Mather, for his friendship and services, in these words: "Thus was *the tongue of a dog* made useful to a feeble and sickly Lazarus."

REMARK.

Should we hazard an opinion on this treatment of the poor Indian, by Dr. Mather, we should conclude that he was induced to it, by the belief of the doctrine of Election or Decrees. He probably thought that the

poor Indians were to be driven from the face of the earth, to make room for the Pilgrims and their descendants, as the Canaanites were to be destroyed for the benefit of God's ancient Israel.

In the last Religious Informer there are several letters, and extracts of letters, from the States of Maine, New-Hampshire, and New-York, reporting interesting revivals of religion among the Arminian Baptists. We have only room for the following :

Extract of a letter from Elder Hermon Jenkins, to the Editor, dated January 2d, 1824.

BROTHER CHASE—I have just returned from the town of Middlebury, New-York. * * * *

About the middle of September last, I felt an impression to visit that place, and on hearing my first sermon a number of the brethren appeared to awaken to a sense of their backslidden state and began to pray. I then visited from house to house and inquired after their welfare. At our next meeting several confessed their faults to one another, and there appeared to be a prospect of a general revival. Assisted by brethren, especially brother Elias Brown, and elder Daniel Brackett, we continued our meetings frequently, which we trust, were owned of God.

About the first of December, the young people appeared very solemn, and several brought to rejoice in the Lord. Meetings were attended almost every evening, and in the day time we visited from house to house to pray for, and with those who were in distress. The work is now spreading among all classes, and in every direction. The attention of the people is so great, that no house can be obtained large enough to contain the people on the Sabbath, consequently we meet in two places.

January 1st, we enjoyed the most solemn meeting I ever witnessed. I spake from Luke, xiii. 6—9, and the Lord attended the word with power. I counted seventy who manifested a determination to try to live anew this year.

The subjects of the reformation are people from ten years old to seventy. Some whole families rejoice together, and the work is still progressing.

From the Connecticut Mirror.

On the death of MR. WOODWARD, late a Tutor in Yale College, who left his office and the College on account of ill health, and went to Europe in search of a cure ; but died in Edinburgh, 23d of last November.

"The spider's most attenuated thread;
Is cord—is cable, to man's tender tie
On earthly bliss ; it breaks at every breeze."

Another ! 'tis a sad word to the heart
That one by one has lost its hold on life,
From all it lov'd or valued, force to part
In detail. Feeling dies not by the knife
That cuts and kills—its tortur'd strife
Is with distill'd affliction, drop by drop
Oozing its bitterness. Our world is rife
With grief and sorrow ; all that we would prop,
Or would be prop'd with, falls—when shall the ruin stop ?

The sea has one, and Palestine has one,*
And Scotland has the last : the snooded maid
Shall gaze in wonder on the stranger's stone,
And wipe the dust off with her tartan plaid—
And from the lonely tomb where thou art laid
Turn to some other monument—nor know
Whose grave she passes, or whose name she read—
Whose lov'd and honour'd relicks lie below,
Whose is immortal joy, and whose immortal wo.

There is a world of bliss hereafter—else
Why are the bad above—the good beneath
The green grass of the grave. The Mower fells
Flowers and briers alike. But man shall breathe
(When he his desolating blade shall sheathe
And rest him from his work,) in a pure sky
Above the smoke of burning worlds—and Death
On scorched pinions with the dead shall lie,
When Time, with all his years and centuries, has passed by.

* Alluding to the death of Professor Fisher, of Yale College, who was shipwrecked on the coast of Ireland, in the Albion ; and the Rev. Mr. Parsons, of the Palestine Mission, who died in Alexandria, Egypt, February, 1822.

TO READERS.

The article in our last, on difference of sentiment among Christians, was copied from the American Baptist Magazine. That, concerning the Shakers, was originally prepared for the N. Y. R. Chronicle, though we did not take it from that paper.